

**FRIENDS OF HORSPATH
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2024**

**Minutes of a Meeting held on Wednesday 25th September 2024 at 7.30pm
in the Horspath Hub.**

PRESENT: Trustees: Sheila Frankum (Chair/Treasurer) Rebecca Brown
Ray Jackson Sally Humphrey
John Underdown Anna Radcliffe
Judy Kent (Secretary)

Friends of Horspath:	Daphne Tilling	Mike Clarke
	Shelagh Lindsay	Ken Lindsay
	Rachel Mullins	Gill Gray

APOLOGIES:	Annette Miller	Carol Cuthbert
	Chris Drew	Margaret Drew
	Sue Rowle	Derek Rowle
	Maureen Lowe	

1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS AGM HELD ON 20/09/23

The minutes of the previous AGM 2023 were approved as a correct record and would have been signed by the Chair if the Secretary had remembered to bring them with her. They were to be signed on Friday 27th September 2024.

2.0 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS AGM

There were no matters arising.

**3.0 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT
(Appendix 1)**

Sheila welcomed everybody to the 11th AGM of the Friends of Horspath. Sheila said that when we first started out, she was Chairman of the Friends of Horspath set up by St Giles' PCC and out of the group came the management of the Hub. Now, as far as management of the Hub was concerned, Ray Jackson was the Chairman, and she was the Treasurer.

The Hub seemed to thrive with so many activities and so many supporters and friends. We had supported the Scarecrow Trail with the theme of Occupations. At the end of the meeting, the different scarecrows in the village were to be shown on the screen. The Apple Day was successful and was fun for everyone with the production of plenty of juice.

We supported the Horspath Calendar this year. Many thanks go to John Underdown, who worked so hard in putting it all together and producing the calendar each year. Also, the Horspath Magazine had gone from strength to strength which, although it was a village-wide newsletter, had its' roots at the

Hub. Again it was down to John and his editing team for all their hard work in putting it together that made the whole thing happen. Villagers were now so much better informed about what was going on in the village.

In the build up to Christmas 2023, we had our Christmas Market, Wreath-Making and even a family party on the day itself.

In 2024, we celebrated the Hub's Tenth Anniversary. It was a really lovely occasion which was so well supported. Our thanks go to all who helped on the day and to Brian Lowe and Mensun Bound for their entertainment. It was also good to have the support of SODC.

Over the year, steady progress had been made with the garden and was still ongoing.

Thanks to Geoff Roynon for designing and maintaining our website so that people could look at our website to see when our facility was free.

We were pleased to offer the Hub for so many different activities and we were always pleased to support something new or to help financially to promote something that was a new venture.

We had had the projector for some time now, but it had proved difficult to be useful for those hiring the Hub. Like all technology it was not straight forward. John had produced easy to follow instructions but then there was the problem of which computer to use and the fact that the equipment was expensive so needed to be locked away. Thanks to John and Mike Clarke, the problem had been resolved which Sheila was to demonstrate at the end.

Because the Hub had been open and well used for ten years, maintenance of the building needed attention. We had managed to replace the fire door and the leaking windowpanes as well as a leak in the roof. Now the whole building needed to be refreshed and it was hoped, with the support of the Parish Council, we might achieve this over the Christmas break.

Finally, Sheila thanked everyone who came and supported the Hub, from volunteers who made cakes and served teas, to those who came to enjoy the cakes and tea. Thanks to all the teachers and students; to the person who provided lifts to enable people to come; to those who provided drills and hammers and the expertise to use them.

Sheila welcomed two new members of the management committee, who were in the process of learning what it was all about. Thank you to them.

Thanks to everyone who came and supported the Hub.

Although Sheila was not the chair of the Hub Management Group, she thanked all the trustees and committee for keeping the place running.

Judy thanked Sheila for all her hard work over the past ten years, and said she was a vital member of the team.

4.0 STONE PIT AND SODC GRANTS

This item was brought forward at the request of John Underdown.

4.1 Stone Pit Grants

John reported that some of us went to the Stone Pit meeting last night. He had never been interrogated to that degree in that everything he said was challenged. The Seated Pilates class had requested £2,400 but because two people came from Wheatley, this was reduced by £400, and £2,000 was awarded.

The Hub had applied for a grant to paint the whole of the interior of the Hub, but Stone Pit had agreed initially to the painting of the Main Hall up to a maximum of £2,400. They had said we should be self-funding and queried why we could not do the painting ourselves.

After Stone Pit had awarded these grants to the Hub, they awarded a grant of £2,300 to the Sports Club for shale with very few questions asked. John said that not everyone who attended the Sports Club was from Horspath.

Anna said she thought we had got to discuss this. They were not helping us. Rebecca said there was a conflict of interest. She said this was a serious issue for the community, Stone Pit having this source of money and how it was being managed. Ray Jackson suggested holding a meeting to discuss Stone Pit.

4.2 SODC Grant

John reported that there was a SODC grant for which we could apply from our local councillor. John had spoken to him to ask about applying for solar panels for the Hub, which he totally supported. He had said that, despite a number of applications, he would support this.

John said there were the following grants available:-

- Revenue grant
- Community Infrastructure Levy grant
- Energy Saving grant
- Wellbeing grant
- Smoke free grant

5.0 FINANCIAL STATEMENT (Appendix 2 – Unaudited Account for Year Ended 31st May 2024)

Sheila said that Kelvin Barnes had been doing our accounts for ten years and he was very good.

5.1 Statement of Financial Activities (page 6)

Some of the things for which we had paid out, such as the new fire door, were not in here.

Total Income and Endowments of £24,579 for 2024 was down on 2023 which was £29,652. This was because the 10-year SODC grant had expired. Kevin had said that we had done really well without that money.

Total Expenditure was £10,221 as compared with £17,031 in 2023.

Net Income on Investments was £14,358, compared with £12,621 in 2023.

Net Funds carried forward were £275,499, compared with £261,141 in 2023.

5.2 Balance Sheet at 31 May 2024 (page 7)

Fixed Tangible Assets were £315,637. Kelvin had said it was probably a lot more now, but that was what we had paid out.

Cash in hand was £20,504, compared with £15,969 in 2023.

Creditors £21,342.

£61,480 was our loan.

Sheila said we had paid off many loans in the past ten years and we now owed £60,000. In June, we paid off £10,000 of that loan, and we were to pay another £5,000 at the end of this year. We had asked Stone Pit for a loan that we could pay back. They had declined.

Current Liabilities were £40,138.

Total Assets minus current liabilities were £275,499. Our asset was the Hub building.

5.3 Incoming Resources for year ended 31 May 2024 (page 11)

The grant of £300 was from Stone Pit for the Making Time class, which paid for the Hall and taxis until January. We had received some wonderful donations from people plus a regular monthly donation. Fundraising events had raised £7,766. Grants, donations and fundraising totalled £15,055. Hall hire had raised £9,524.

John Underdown queried what the grant of £14,664 was in 2023 and Sheila undertook to find out.

ACTION: Sheila to find out what the grant of £14,664 was in 2023.

5.4 **Expenses for year ended 31 May 2024 (page 12)**

Sheila said we had had a water meter installed, and we were no longer with Thames Water. They were charging £5 per month, and then it went up to £17 per month. We had received a refund on heat and light.

We were no longer employing a cleaning company, which cost £1,238 in 2023. We now employed a villager.

Property maintenance was money spent on the garden of £4,366 and professional fees were for Kelvin Barnes, our accountant.

Insurance paid in January was £660. We paid a subscription of £50 for Oxfordshire Community Group. Licences were for music, films and alcohol.

Our total expenses were £10,221, compared with £17,031 in 2023.

We had been claiming gift aid, although Kelvin queried some of our claims.

6.0 **OUTSTANDING LOANS**

Sheila said that £15,000 of a £60,000 loan was to be paid off by the end of 2024. In 2025, we would have an outstanding loan of £45,000. Hopefully we could pay off another £15,000 next year. Over the past ten years we had paid off an awful lot of loans, including the £20,000 ACRE loan, and the SODC loan had expired.

7.0 **CLASSES AND ACTIVITIES** **(Appendix 3 Classes and Activities, and Appendix 4 Weekly Activities)**

Sally Humphrey had circulated a list of Weekly Activities at the Hub. There were two Yoga groups, three Pilates groups, two Art groups, Babies 1st, Table Tennis and Line Dancing. There were also monthly special interest groups: Making Time, Creative Writing, The Senior Residents' Club, the Film Club, Horspath Wine Club, and Age UK Information and Advice sessions.

Having suffered a loss of regular students, Kim Barresi's **Pilates Class** had revived and there was now a waiting list of two.

Creative Writing now had nine members and met every six weeks or so. It was a self-taught group and produced very creative work.

Table Tennis numbers had fallen as people got older, but a recent advertisement in the village magazine resulted in a 19-year-old boy joining the group. Apparently he wasn't very good but was keen to learn.

Art Matters focussed on providing an hour of fun with art projects, especially for students with learning difficulties. Additional members would be welcomed. This group was supported by the Stone Pit charity.

Sally reported that Stone Pit had supported the **Seated Pilates** class with a grant of £2,000, which paid for the tutor's salary and the village taxi. This meant that the students fee could be reduced from £7 to £4 per class paid six weeks in advance. There was a bursary for people who could not afford it. It was now offering a free Trial Class to encourage more people to come.

Age UK Information and Advice sessions were now carried out by Sarah Irvine once a month.

The Age UK Film Club was now run by Valerie Hunt. There had been a period when it was difficult to get the projector to work. There was now a special cabinet to house the laptop made by Mike Clarke. This meant that all the necessary equipment was already wired and ready to go. Neil Lloyd-Jani provided free transport to the club.

Sunday Funtime was organised by Maureen Underdown on the first Sunday of the month. It was usually well attended with a story, an activity and refreshments.

Hypnobirthing was now being run by Stephanie McGee from her home.

Horspath Wine Club was going from strength to strength. The co-ordinator, Nigel Montgomery had requested a new fridge with a larger freezer. The trustees could not fund this now but were to keep it in mind. Nigel wanted to run a Wine Festival. Although it would take a lot of work, he thought it could produce a lot of money for the Hub.

New Initiatives

During the year, several new initiatives had been started.

JJ Formento and Sue Rowle were hoping to attract enough people for a **Ballet Class for Adult Beginners**. Unfortunately, not enough people came.

A **Coding Club for Kids** was advertised in the village magazine but there was no response.

John Underdown started fortnightly **Computer Doctor** sessions. After an initial surge, numbers dropped off and John went to people's houses to help them.

John had also run four very successful **Sculpture Groups**. They were six-to-eight-week courses of two-hour classes and students had produced some very creative works.

8.0 FUTURE EVENTS

8.1 Mensun Bound and Brian Lowe in Conversation

(Appendix 5)

This coming Saturday we were pleased to be welcoming Mensun Bound and Brian Lowe telling their stories of exploration and discovery. Mensun was a leading marine archaeologist with 45 years of experience and his book, "Wonders of the Deep" was to be available for sale at £30. All profits were in aid of the Falkland Islands Museum. Tickets were to be £10 for adults and £5 for under 16s, the profits of which would go to the Hub.

8.2 Apple Pressing Day

Apple Pressing Day was going to be later this year, coinciding with the first day of the Scarecrow Trail. This was because Natalie, who organised both events, was a very busy lady.

8.3 Scarecrow Trail

The Scarecrow Trail's theme this year was "Countries of the World". People entering a scarecrow paid £5 and maps cost £1. Thanks went to Minuteman Press who donated the cost of printing the maps.

This event was held over the half-term week and was a lot of work for Natalie, Maureen Underdown, John Underdown and Sheila Frankum. Daphne Tilling volunteered to be at the Hub to sell maps one morning. All classes were cancelled but the Coffee Morning and Post Office were to go ahead.

9.0 MAINTENANCE OF THE HUB AND GARDEN

9.1 The Garden

Ray Jackson said the garden was coming along well, with thanks to Daphne Tilling for her work on the rockery garden. Ray said the garden was gradually coming together. We were soon to have the tree planted and we were to plant some bulbs. We had earmarked Saturday 5th October for a gardening day.

The wire fence had been erected and the trees in the corner had been hacked down.

9.2 The Hub Building

The repair to the roof had been done and the plaster work in the top right-hand corner of the Main Hall needed to be repaired. Chris Drew had attempted to paint up there, but the plaster was too unstable. The interior of the Hub needed to be painted.

10.0 COFFEE MORNINGS AND MARKETS (Appendix 6)

10.1 Coffee Mornings

Anna Radcliffe reported that the weekly Friday Coffee Mornings continued to do well. We had raised our prices in January so that everything was 50p more expensive. Nobody had complained and we had continued to have a good attendance with a good income. Anna said she had put a short article in the Horspath magazine asking new people to visit us but had not noticed anyone new yet.

We continued to welcome the Post Office in the form of Judy every Friday and this facility definitely helped the Hub in many ways.

These coffee mornings could not happen without the volunteers who made such gorgeous cakes and gave up their time to serve refreshments on a Friday morning. Not to forget the “strong” men who set up the tables and put them away. And thanks go to Shelagh Lindsay for laundering the tablecloths.

We were to send the proceeds of the coffee morning to MacMillan Cancer Relief (in two days’ time) and to Children in Need in November.

10.2 Christmas and Spring Markets

The twice-yearly markets continued. Since we started these many years ago, it was clear that people’s tastes had changed. We used to have several tables for people to enjoy a cuppa and cake. Many fewer people wanted this now. There were definitely fewer visitors to our summer market.

So for our next market on 7th December, we planned to try out bacon butties, concentrate on the raffle with really good prizes and give a lot of encouragement to Santa’s favourite helper who was to stand in for Santa this year. Once again, many thanks to all our volunteers for this event: those who do refreshments, the Cake stall, the Raffle and the Plants. Also all the furniture removers. What would we do without them.

I am relying on Natalie to produce some super, eye-catching posters.

Daphne said we could not do without Father Christmas.

11.0 THE POST OFFICE (Appendix 7)

Judy Kent reported that the foot fall from 1st September 2023 to 31st August 2024 was **1,038**, which was the most we had had for the past four years when the totals were way under 1,000.

There had been only one occasion when the equipment had totally failed and that was on 8th September 2023. However, Judy was able to do 10 transactions by selling stamps. There was another occasion this August when

the printer failed to work all morning, but Judy managed to do 12 transactions for customers who did not require a receipt.

The highest number of customers was 45 in December 2023, and the lowest was nine in February. And her equipment was working perfectly that day!

Judy thanked all the volunteers who ran the Coffee Mornings, providing customers (and herself) with sustenance and a chat. She was very thankful for the help of those who brought in her equipment from her car and packed it in her car at the end of the session. They also provided security for her at the beginning and end of her sessions for which she was very grateful.

Judy was very encouraged about the increase in foot fall in the past year. Long may it continue.

Sheila thanked Judy and Christine Donnelly from Great Milton. When Vipin's Post Office closed in the village shop, people wanted to get the Post Office back. Post Office management looked at potential venues which included the pub and the village hall, as well as the Hub. With the Coffee Mornings and the security of the fire door, they decided that the only venue that was viable was the Hub.

12.0 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Markets

Mike Clarke voiced his strong opinion that the Madagascar stall took up too much room and was a nuisance. John Underdown added that at the last market, some people had said they were too dominant. Anna said that we supported what they were doing for Madagascar, and they were appreciated by a lot of people. She said she would consider moving them to another place, but they were a very colourful part of the market.

13.0 DATE OF NEXT AGM

Wednesday 24th September 2025 at 7.00pm at the Horspath Hub.

Signed:(Chair) Dated:
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